

'A long time coming': Aurora Transportation Center project on track

 chicagotribune.com/suburbs/aurora-beacon-news/news/ct-abn-aurora-transcenter-st-1029-20171027-story.html

Steve Lord

The Aurora City Council has approved nine resolutions designed to get the Aurora Transportation Center enhancement project on North Broadway downtown ready to go.

All the resolutions were to finish up Phase II of the project — an overall \$14 million enhancement of Aurora Transportation Center facilities.

The city is trying to get things in order to bid the project in January and start construction by May.

Aurora secured an \$11.4 million Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality grant from the federal government for the project.

It also will receive a \$2 million grant from the Kane County Forest Preserve District.

Earlier this year, the city received permission from the federal government to move up the project's timeline so it can start next year.

In approving the work this year, several aldermen pointed out that the project will be a lot of work, and already has been a lot of work to get organized.

Ald. Michael Saville, 6th Ward, called the project "a long time coming."

It was first conceived as part of the city's 2005-2006 Seize the Future downtown.

"It's a project that's been around for a while," said Ald. Robert O'Connor, at large.

The part of the project that has gotten the most attention from the public is a 900-foot curved pedestrian and bicycle bridge that will connect bike trails on the west and east banks of the Fox River, going over Blues Island.

The bridge will be built at two elevations, with pedestrians using a lower elevation on the south side of the bridge and bikes using a higher elevation on the north side. In the middle of the bridge, on the island, the span will widen to create an overlook for people to view the river, island and downtown Aurora.

The bridge also will be illuminated at night and will include some programmable lights for special occasions or even to match what is happening onstage at RiverEdge Park.

Part of the project also will add onto the southern portion of RiverEdge Park, creating a southern entrance and a beer concession stand. The beer stand at the park is being patterned after those at Summerfest in Milwaukee, which have proven to be successful, city officials

said.

Other parts of the project include a total of 843 more parking spaces around the transportation center, with 123 at the station itself and 94 more in the lots on the west side of the river; moving the bus pulse point next to the train tracks; and relocating the traffic signal that is the current entrance to the Two Brothers Roundhouse on North Broadway to the southern entrance of the transportation center.

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